

General Plan Update Fact Sheet

What General Plans do:

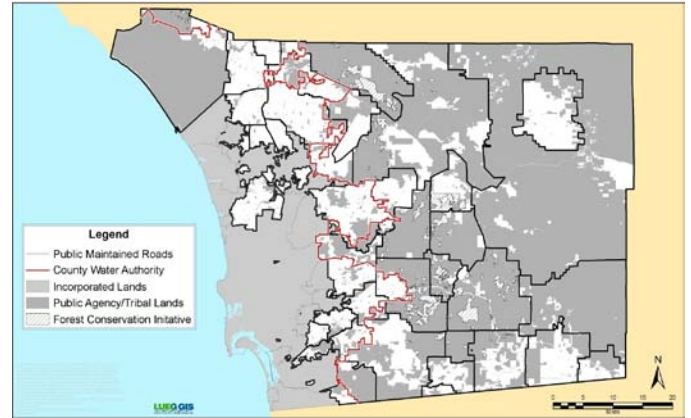
- Guide community development. Set the philosophy and policies that determine what gets built where --
- how communities will accommodate growth while preserving character and protecting what the communities value.

GP Update:

- First *complete, comprehensive* update of San Diego County's general plan in 30 years. (30 years ago the total County population was 1.7 million, rather than today's 3.2 million, and the California Environmental Quality Act was only 8 years old.)

Overall Goal:

- To improve the existing County general plan by balancing growth the need to limit traffic congestion, preserve the environment and reduce the need to expand infrastructure and essential services (which can save taxpayers money). To accommodate a reasonable share of projected regional growth, an estimated additional 200,000 people, a 41 percent increase in the unincorporated population.



The County's General Plan primarily covers privately owned land in the unincorporated area, which are the areas shown in white in the figure above.

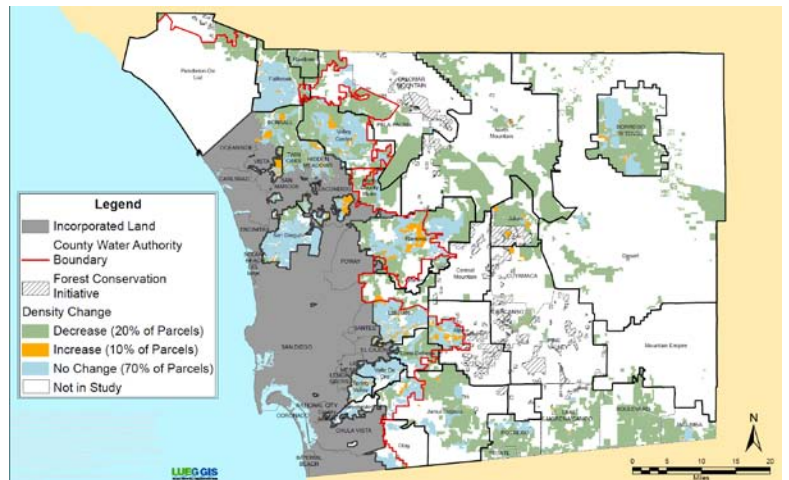
Background Information	
Acres Covered by Plan: (2,284,521 total acres in unincorporated County)	768,811: Total privately-owned acres affected by plan. (*Excludes some public lands affected by plan)
Square Miles Covered by Plan: (3,570 total Square miles in unincorporated County)	1,201: Total sq miles privately-owned prop affected by plan. (*Excludes some public lands affected by plan)
Population Covered by Plan:	503,320 (SANDAG estimate as of 2010)
Outreach:	More than 500 public meetings held.
	Monthly electronic newsletter created to update stakeholders and public.
	Web pages created to continually update the public.
	Created two stakeholder groups representing more than 40 groups: Steering Committee; Interest Group
	Ongoing media coverage.
Support:	Endorsed by 23 of 26 County's community advisory groups.
	Created with broad public input from builders, business owners, environmentalists, farmers, industry professionals, homeowners, landowners and renters.

Features	
Accommodate reasonable regional growth in unincorporated areas:	Accommodate 170,000 additional people, a 35 percent increase in population.
Decrease Sprawl:	Reduce growth allowed in the existing general plan by 16 percent.
Ease strain on essential services:	Accomplished in part by shifting 20 percent of expected future growth toward western unincorporated communities with established or already-planned infrastructure such as roads.
Use “rural” Smart Growth Principles:	Develop in compact footprint, keep homes out of hazardous wildfire areas, retain separation between communities.
Preserve Community Character:	Ensure development fits character of existing communities.
Use of Technology:	Used latest land-use planning innovations and technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which includes access to aerial photography and property-specific data and spatial modeling of key issues such as fire service response and groundwater drawdown.
Simplicity, streamlined:	275 total pages: General Plan Update 1,025 total pages: Existing General Plan

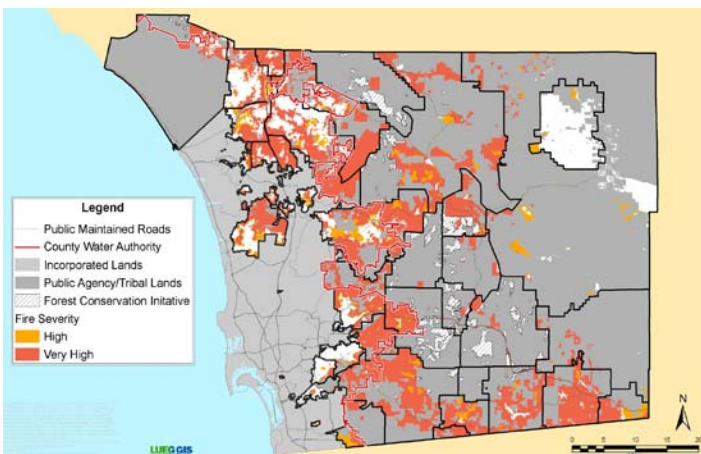
Density Changes:

	Parcels	% Change
Decreased Density	30,360	20%
No Change	103,745	70%
Increased Density	14,953	10%
Total	149,058	

Over 80% of the parcels in the unincorporated area will remain the same or increase density with the General Plan Update. The remaining 20% that will decrease density are mainly large landholdings in the rugged backcountry.



Wildfire Risk and Future Homes:

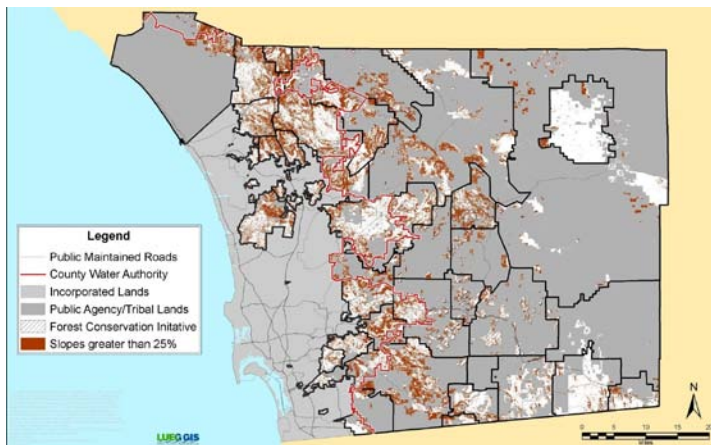


The majority of the unincorporated County faces significant wildfire risk. The highest categories are shown in the map to the left. The table below shows how the General Plan Update will reduce the number of homes planned for these areas. This reduces future firefighting costs and safety concerns.

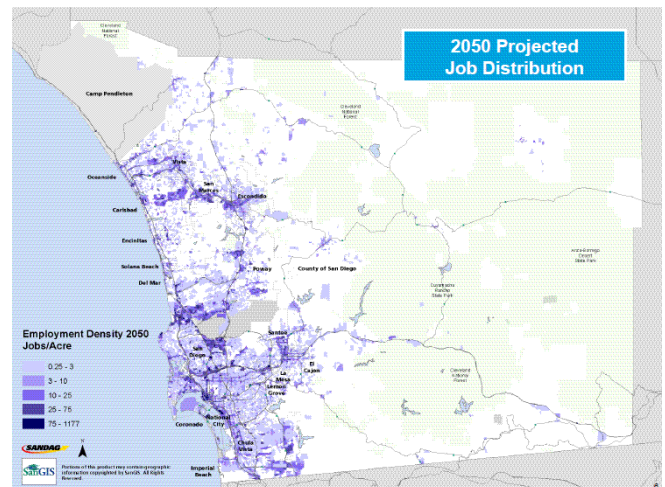
Zone	Planned Future Homes		
	Existing GP	GP Update	% Change
Very High	60,780	32,684	-46%
High	8,454	7,795	-8%
Moderate	31,766	18,785	-41%
Urban/Other	10,934	12,875	+18%
TOTAL	111,934	72,138	

Guiding Principles/Benefits

- 1) Support a reasonable share of projected regional population growth. (Roughly an additional 200,000, a 41 percent increase).
- 2) Promote health and sustainability by locating new growth near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs in a compact pattern of development. (Avoid sprawl)
- 3) Reinforce the vitality, local economy, and individual character of existing communities when planning new housing, employment, and recreational opportunities.
- 4) Promote environmental stewardship that protects the range of natural resources and habitats that uniquely define the County's character and ecological importance.
- 5) Ensure that development accounts for physical constraints and the natural hazards of the land.



The majority of the unincorporated County contains steep slopes (shown above), few roads, sensitive habitat, limited sewer and water service, and other constraints with significantly limit development. The General Plan Update provides more realistic development potential and helps public agencies avoid having to plan for what may never be built.



Now and into 2050 the majority of the region's jobs will occur within the incorporated cities to the west of the unincorporated County. The General Plan Update shifts future development in the County so it will be closer to those jobs, reducing commutes and the need for additional roads.

- 6) Provide and support a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports community development patterns and, when appropriate, plan for development which supports public transportation.
- 7) Maintain environmentally sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. (Lessen environmental impacts.)
- 8) Preserve agriculture as an integral component of the region's economy, character, and open space network.
- 9) Minimize public costs of infrastructure and services and correlate their timing with new development. (Lessen taxpayer burden)
- 10) Recognize community and stakeholder interests while striving for consensus.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- 1) Does state law require general plans to be updated?
 - a. No. There is no state law that requires General Plans to be updated.
- 2) How often must General Plans be updated?
 - a. There is no legal requirement for general plans to be updated. However, cities and counties are required to update their housing element --- one of the seven elements that a general plan is required to cover --- every eight years.
- 3) How much money has the county spent on the General Plan Update?
 - a. Our most recent estimate was \$18 million.